THE ACCESS To Virtue: OR, Permitted Approach OF A Court Penitent TO THE Divine *ASTREA.*

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Printed, MDCCIV.

1608/ S473.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15 MAY 70

THE

ACCESS

To Virtue, &c.

IF in this *World* where Dangers daily ſpring,
And Inconveniency *freſh Sorrows* bring;
Where *Troubles* upward as the Spark's ariſe,
And no *contentment*, to attend the Wiſe:

Whe

VVhere *men*'s exceſs, as many *Liquids* need;

As there are *Sects*, or Letters in the *Creed*;

Where humane *errors*, ſeldom are redreſs'd,

And longeſt *Folleys*, are Eſteemed beſt;

'Tis Time that reaſon, *ſhould* its ſenſe *expreſs*,
Againſt thoſe *Vices*, which would *truth* depreſs,
And make tho' *Late*, towards Virtue her *Acceſs*.

Deluding *Earth*, which hath ſo long amus'd,

And with *falſe ſhapes* my dreaming Soul abus'd:

Tyrannick *World*, where ſimple Mortals buy,

With *Life* and *hazard*, Splendid *Slavery*;

Henceforth adieu, my goodly ſtock of years,

Out for that, I now lament with Tears. *Mo-*

Monarchs, who with amazing Splendor *glare*,

And *favôurites*, who their reflections are ;

Both ſhine, 'tis true, but 'tis like glaſs they do ;

Brittle as that, and made of *Aſhes* too :

The hour is ſet wherein they muſt diſown

The *Royal Pomp*, the Treaſure and the Throne,

The dazling Luſtre of *Majeſtick* State,

Shall be extinguiſh'd by the *hand* of fate ;

Highneſs muſt ſtoop into the hollow *Grave*,

And keep *ſad Court* in a cold dampiſh *Cave*.

Beauty and jovial *Youth*, decays apace ;

Age ſtill, and *ſickneſs*, oft doth both deface.

The *great*, and *Rich*, whom all adore and fear,

Whose strength doth so unshakable appear,

Is but a *Tower* built on flitting Sands,

No longer than the *Tempest* sleepeth, stands;

Nor can the *Calm* of *Fortune* long insure,

Or *Darling* Riches, crazie Man secure.

We Moulder of our selves, and soon, or late,

We must *resign* beloved Life to fate.

From stately Palaces they must remove,

The narrow Lodging of a *Grave* to prove:

Leave the fair *Train* and the light guilded *Room*,

To lye alone benighted in a *Tomb*.

GOD

GOD only is Immortal; man not ſo;

Life to be paid, upon demand we owe.

The rigid *Laws* of *Fate* with none diſpenſe,

From the leaſt beggar to the greateſt Prince.

The crooked *ſythe* which no *diſtinction* knows,

Monarchs and *Slaves* indifferently mows:

One day we'd pity thoſe we now admire,

When after all the Glory they acquire;

And all the Famous Conqueſts they have made,

Fierce *Death* their *Lawrels* in the *Duſt* hath lay'd;

Thoſe heads and hands, which States and Princes ſteer,

Who *rule* in *peace* and *Conquer* in the *War*,

Shall by a ſad and certain change of *ſtate*,

Be doom'd a *prize* to death, and rigid fate :

Then be no more; their very Name will dye

To *fame*, unleſs preſerv'd to *Hiſtory* :

'Tis *Heav'ns* great KING alone whom Angels ſerves,

Who our whole *hearts*, whole *care*, whole *love* deſerves;

To HIM all's due, there's nought at our command,

But muſt be paid at His *Divine* demand :

To HIM the *Chriſtian* ought to make his Court,

His *Love* the only Matter of Import :

Not, but that *Honour* muſt to Kings be paid,

Being by *Heav'n*, Heav'ns *Vicegerents* made :

To *ſuch* we dedicate our Hearts and Hands,

With due Submiſſion to their *juſt* commands;

And their *unjuſt* ones, tho' we cannot do,

We muſt the Mulct, with patience undergo;

'Tis *Sacrilege* (in any caſe) to pry

Into the *God-like* Power of Majeſty,

And meer *Typheon* Inſolence to ſtrive,

Law to a *King*, with lawleſs Arms to give;

But all good *Subjects*, ſhould adore the *hand*,

By which Kings and the Crowns they were, do ſtand;

And while the Earths great Maſters we revere,

Pay *homage* alſo to the *Thunderer*;

To GOD, who *Kings* obey; whoſe bounty gave

Their *Scepters*, *Crowns*, and all the *Goods* they have:

To GOD whoſe *Sun* beams guildeth Humane ſtate,

And Glory gives to each *Majeſtick* fate;

With whoſe unknown, but to HIM, eaſie skill,

Manages Powers and Princes as HE will.

Now for to get in favour with this *Prince*,

There needs no more, but ſimple innocence;

No Honour at his Court is bought with Gold;

But for cheap *Love* are all *Preferments* ſold:

With a good ſtock of *Love* one there may climb,

To a *great Fortune* in a little Time.

Nor

Nor is it hard methinks to *Love* a GOD,
Who is himſelf, ſo *loving*, and ſo *good* :
In other Courts a Man doth loſe himſelf,
Oft for a little, and drudg'd for pelf ;
In Buſineſs bearing an uncertain ſtate,
Made void (ſometimes) by envy, or by hate,
Rendring *poſſeſſion* of too ſhort a date.
For as a *Dropſie* makes the body grow,
(At the ſame time that it brings *Nature* low)
O'er-whelm'd with Water, or choak'd up with wind,
So *Wealth* (at once) ſwells up, and ſtarves the mind ;
But GOD, the *Souls* Capacity doth fill ;
His Bounty over-flows Mans boundleſs Will ; And

And ſince the Earth cannot our Nature bleſs,
And the great world's too little for the leſs;
His Boundleſs ſelf, he gives us, is ſo good
(As *Romans* hold) the *Sacramental* food,
To Regale us, with's *Body* and His *Blood*.
With Heav'nly *Manna* Angels Taſtful meat,
The ſame he gave His loving *Twelve* to Eat;
HIMSELF the *Treator*, and himſelf the Treat.
Come then and crow'd into this *Royal* Court,
And to the ſource of goodneſs all reſort,
Love HIM, whoſe goodneſs words cannot expreſs;
And whoſe all-flowing *bounty* is no leſs;

Litt

Lift up your Reaſon then, and have a care,

No fooliſh worldly *Baubles* enter there ;

With ſuch precaution you'll acquire his Grace,

And purchaſe in his Holy Court a place,

Where you will bleſs the day you firſt awoke,

The happy *Time* in which your ſlumber broke :

Crouds of all Bleſſings will your *Heart* invade,

And your freſh blooming joys will never fade.

No more the ſtorms of *Fortune* you will fear,

That cauſe ſo many *wreks*, and *wretches* here,

Where (in a Moment) all the *Cargo*'s loſt,

Which your whole *ſtock* of Anctious care has coſt :

One day [with GOD] affords you more content,

Than twenty Lives, in *Courts* of *Princes* ſpent;

An angry word, a ſlight, a gloomy frown,

Will be enough to caſt a *Courtier* down :

If he would *beg* a *favour* of his *King*,

Let his *requeſt* be ne'er ſo mean a *thing*,

A *hundred* journeys he muſt undertake ;

His *Suit*, to this and that great *Courtier* make ;

Thouſands of *Legs*, and *Cringes* it will coſt ;

And after all, perhaps, his *Labour* loſt ;

But with GOD's *Votaries* it is not ſo ;

We cannot ask ſo faſt, as he'll beſtow ;

His EAR is ſtill, to hear our *ſuits* inclin'd,
And to each *Suiter* daily proveth kind.
HE often hears, before we are aware,
And our leaſt wants by him conſider'd are,
The ſmalleſt Hair, fall's not beſide his care.
On HIM we cannot our good *Thoughts* diſplace,
Unleſs we madly throw away HIS *Grace* :
Only to him our Hearts ſhould yield the ſway,
And not, by falſe Obedience Heav'n betray ;
For *firſt* GOD doth what he would have us do ;
Love, with a *Love*, beyond example *True* :
His *Charming* LAW, is *Love*, his Yoke is ſweet,
Both for the King and pooreſt beggar, meet,

Eaſie and light, alike to great and ſmall,

And the ſame Hire propoſed to them all.

Of *great Men*, he to *him* is great alone,

Who to himſelf becomes a *little one*.

The only *Greatneſs* which poor Man can have,

Is to become his *Great Redeemer*'s ſlave;

That King, that doth not Heav'ns juſt King obey,

A Traytor is himſelf to *Majeſty*.

The ſimple *Shepherd*, who with chaſt *deſire*,

And chearful *Innocence* to Heav'n aſpires;

The honeſt painful *Labourer*, who ſweats,

From morn to night, to get the Bread he eats;

If he ſerves Heav'n, is indeed more great,

Than Kings, with all their pride, and Purple ſtate.

Thrice brave thoſe Monarchs, who have dar'd to fly,

From all the Alluring *Charms* of Majeſty;

Like *Carlos Quintus* worldly pomp forſake,

Unarm'd alone, the *Heav'n* of Heav'ns t'attack,

A *Holy War* with *Hoaſts* of pleaſures wage,

And tho' the *Fleſh* did for the foe Ingage,

Triumph o'er *Foreign* and *Domeſtick* rage.

Thrice *bleſt* are thoſe, who *fled* from being great,

From *Courts* to ſafer Cottages retreat.

Heav'n kindly doth their humble thoughts defeat;

For *Greatneſs*, while they ſtrive to ſhun, they meet,

They are made great, and more Glorious Kings,

By being juſt, than by all earthly things,

Ah! how we *win*, in *loſing* for our GOD,

While *Heav'n* is gain'd for a poor ſorry Clod

Of Earth, when for a ſhort *Grief* here endur'd,

We are of *everlaſting Joys* aſſur'd:

Since for one pleaſure, we refuſe our ſenſe,

We ſhall have *Millions* for our recompence.

Poor abus'd men, unlucky *flock*, that ſtray

Without the *Shepherd*, void of the right way,

Unthinking *Things*, that periſh with delight,

Which all the *Threats* of Heav'n cannot affright:

For ſure thoſe *Pains*, which doth on ſin attend,

Pain which begins, but never muſt have end ;

The immaterial *Fire* that burneth ſtill ;

But to their great misfortune cannot kill.

The *Devils*, *Dungeons*, all ſorts of *Pain*,

Which *Human* fortitude cannot ſuſtain,

Might (one would think) Mans brutiſh courage ſhake

And in our *Souls* a Noble fear awake :

But if the *Racks* of *Hell*, can't ſin ſubdue,

Suffer the *Lord* of *Hoſts* to *Conquer* you ;

Oppoſe *Him* not unwiſely, but Imbrace

The Favourable Offers of His Grace :

Reſtore *Him* to the Kingdom of your *Hearts*,

Loſt without *Mercy*, by the Devils Arts :

The old *Uſurper's* Lawleſs power diſown ;

Depoſe the *Helliſh Tyrant* from the *Throne*,

And let *King* JESUS Reign in it alone.

His Law is much more eaſy to obſerve,

Than thoſe o'th' World, which we gladly ſerve;

It neither hurts the *Body*, nor the *mind* ;

But is indeed to one, and t'other kind :

A check ſometimes it may afford to *ſenſe* ;

But is, at length, its own benevolence,

O *Divine* Law ! O eaſy *Law* of *Love* !

Let me obſerve thee, and thy wages prove, But

But then i'th' World, a hundred Laws there be

Void of all *ſenſe*, but full of Tyranny :

Where *foppiſh* form, our Liberty reſtrains,

And Cripples us with falſe fantaſtick Chains.

You muſt pretend to love whom you deteſt ;

Faun on the *great One*, when by him oppreſt ;

With ſneering Praiſe, Guild o'er his blackeſt crimes,

And all thoſe *Humours* which debauch the Times :

Mask your *diſpleaſure* with a ſmiling *Face*,

And ſwear you'r highly pleas'd with your diſgrace ;

Triumph in ſhow, when you are over-thrown,

And all your diſcontents, and *Griefs* diſown ;

Cut-

Cutting off quite (with baſe uneaſie Art)

The honeſt Commerce, of the *Mouth* the *Heart*,

O, ſhameful *ſlavery* of poor Mankind;

Unworthy of a Man, or Chriſtian mind;

Inſtead of CHRIST, whom always we ſhould own,

Falſe Tyranny, and *Paſſion* we enthrone;

Cringing to thoſe that from all *Virtue* run,

To ſerve a Thouſand Maſters in their turn.

The Crowded throngs, of Vice could never ſhow,

Such Pleaſure, which true virtue doth beſtow:

From *Innocence*, a Native joy accrews;

But wracking ſorrow, always guilt purſues,

The *ill Man*'s never quiet, nor *content* ;

The *Good* is full of *chear*, tho' *Penitent* :

His inward *Calm* upon his Brow appears,

And *Halcion* like, no bluſt'ring *Storm* he fears.

Him, all the *Turns* of *Fate*'s prepar'd to find,

Meets *Frowns* and *Favours*, with an equal mind.

If *Sickneſs* warns him of approaching Death ;

Or *Fortune* robs him of his worldly Wealth,

It cannot his unſhaken Courage move ;

Who, above Earth, hath plac'd in Heav'n his Love ;

His Health, his Riches, and his Sole delight,

Is here to ſerve his GOD with all his might ;

And that great Maſter faithfully to Trace,

Whoſe death was *Triumph*, pleaſure a diſgrace :

He lov'd the *Croſs*; O *Croſs*! O happy *Wood* !

That once was manur'd with our *Saviours* Blood,

And *moiſt'ned* with his *Tears*, with *Tears* of *Grief*,

Whilſt *he* that *ſhed* them, *dy'd* for our *Relief* ;

Whoſe all revenging *Death* [by th' *Croſs*] did quell,

The Uſurped force of *Sin* and *power* of Hell ;

The *Stigians* Monſters *power*, and ſet free

Renowned *Heroes* from *Captivity* :

Whoſe *Love*, I find, to ſuch exceſs amounts,

My *Gratitude* is loſt in the account.

When

When *Puniſhment* was to my Actions due,

Amazing *Favours* my *miſdees* enſuſe,

Inſtead of being, by your Juſtice thruſt,

With ſudden *Thunder*, into Native duſt.

While with my works, I earn'd the Fire of Hell,

And Satan *Triumph'd* o'er my wretched Will,

Inſtead of Loving YOU, the only Good:

I made each empty vanity my God;

What diſmal blindneſs did poſſeſs my mind,

For ſilly ſhort-liv'd *Toyes*, to have reſign'd

A bleſt *Eternity*; and you dear *Lord*,

Who can a real Heav'nly Good afford!

EYES, on my Cheeks, let trickling Tears run down.

Your *Guilty Selves*, in your own waters Drown.

False Guides that led me to the Hunters snare,

VVhen by my self left wholy to your Care;

Poor and Ambitious, fond deluded sight,

Thus on the sorry *Creature* to delight;

Your *Fellow slave*, a bit of *Earth*, a *Dream*,

E'en a poor wretched *Nothing* to Esteem;

For what avails a *Mitre* or a *Crown*,

Or all that here a Man can call his own.

Those whom our fauning *Flatterers*, call great;

VVhom baser *Mankind* prostrate at their Feet,

In

In the Divine, Eternal *Glaſs* appear,

As little as the meaneſt *Mortal* here.

When th'eye in ſorrow ſets, and Life's *Fire*,

With the *Ice* of *Death*, in darkneſs doth expire;

What Matters, Gold by ſome Men ſo ador'd;

What *Pleaſure* will a ſtary *Crown* afford?

This Garb ill fits, a pale and Lifeleſs *Head*,

And that bright *Mettle* ſhines not to the Dead;

Corruption then *will* not forbear its Prey,

For fear of *Death* and *helpleſs Majeſty*:

Nor *will* that *Luſtre* which amaz'd poor Man,

Dazel the *Legions* of bold *Vermin* then:

Alas!

Alas! there's no diſtinction in the Grave

Between the greateſt *King*, and meaneſt *Slave*;

All Fleſh is there unto one *Change* deſtin'd,

And leaves all *World Goods* and *Fame* behind.

But different *Fates*, the Reighteous *Souls* attend,

From theirs that here doth make a wicked End.

Thoſe of the *Good*, to Heav'ns great King repair,

The unknown Pleaſures of his *Court* to ſhare,

In Peace and *Glorious Triumph* to enjoy,

The *Fruit* of their labours *Victory*;

But thoſe who Lodg'd in Body's did defy,

With unrepented *Crimes* the *Deity*,

Con-

Condemn'd to *Chains* and hopeleſs of Relief;

Dye to all *Bliſs*, but ever live to *Grief*;

It is a doleful Scene, to ſee baſe Man,

Provoke his patient MAKER, all he can;

Shun happineſs, ſo eaſie to be won,

And take a world of pains to be undone:

Even employ his whole Life-long, to Buy,

A wretched Right, to endleſs miſery:

Thus he, who Studies to indulge his Earth,

And quite neglects the meaning of his Birth;

Into the Gapeing jaws of Satan Runs,

And the inviting Arms of JESUS ſhuns:

Thoſe *Arms*, that ſtands ſtill open to receive;

All weary Prodigals, that Sin doth leave; Arms

Arms full of *Love* and *Piety* which diſplay,

Ev'n to foes, and Traytors *Sanctuary*;

For thoſe, he left his *Fathers* bright abode,

Made *Son* of Man, to make Man Son of GOD.

To *Cure* their *Wounds*, he Life's *Elixir* bled,

And *dy'd a Death*, to *Raiſe* them from the dead.

Dear JESUS, who with ſuch a Charming Art,

Hath ſoften'd and reduc'd Mans ſinful Heart;

From Worldly Vice, her *Votary* ſet free,

And from the *World*, deliver'd ſinful me:

For ſuch your Favours, ſhew me but the way,

Good Lord, my due Acknowledgment to pay,

The ſharpeſt pain for thee ſhall eaſy be,

And nought ſhall hinder my ACCESS to thee.

FINIS.

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